



Watch List 2021

Virtual Event

2021 WATCH LIST POLICY DIALOGUE

24-25 November 2021

14:00 – 17:00 CET (Brussels)

Register [here](#). Or watch live on Crisis Group's [Youtube channel](#).

Overview

Crisis Group invites you to join the annual Watch List Policy Dialogue, a series of roundtables discussing international crises, the drivers of hostility and causes of instability, and policy options to prevent, mitigate and help solve deadly conflicts. The event is open to policy practitioners, regional experts and diplomats working on peace and security from the European Union and its member states, civil society and international organisations.

This year, the dialogue will take place over two days in a virtual format, and will gather participants around four short and dynamic panel discussions on Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, Lebanon, and Venezuela. Drawing from the analyses and recommendations presented in Crisis Group's yearly issues of the EU Watch List – the [Watch List 2021](#), and its [May](#) and [October](#) 2021 updates – Crisis Group analysts and expert panellists will discuss how the EU can play a stronger role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and address key policy challenges to generate stronger prospects for peace.

The meeting will be on the record and will be held online. Below you will find a draft agenda with the topics of each session. Participants can choose if they would like to attend the entire event or individual sessions.

AGENDA

Day 1 - Wednesday, 24 November 2021	
14h00-14h15 (CET)	Welcome Richard Atwood , Interim President and CEO, Crisis Group Representative from the European Union , to be confirmed
14h15-15h30 (CET)	Session I: How to deal with the Taliban's Afghanistan <p>Following the fall of Kabul and the Taliban takeover in August, Afghanistan is again in turmoil, in a deeper humanitarian crisis and on the brink of a complete financial collapse. The country is dependent on external funds, which are now frozen given the diplomatic deadlock in which Afghanistan finds itself. Internally, the security situation has rapidly worsened, with the Taliban's rule challenged by the increasing activities of the ISKP, and by the rising ethnic and tribal tensions. This panel will build on Crisis Group's assessment and recommendations of the Autumn 2021 Watch List, looking at how the EU, its member states, and other international actors should play their role in ensuring urgent humanitarian aid and relief, while also finding a diplomatic approach for a possible engagement with the Taliban.</p> <p><i>Speakers</i></p> <p>Kate Clark, Author at the Afghanistan Analysts Network Tomas Niklasson, EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan Graeme Smith, Senior Consultant on Afghanistan, Crisis Group</p> <p><i>Moderator</i></p> <p>Pierre Prakash, Deputy Program Director for Asia, Crisis Group</p>
15h30-15h45 (CET)	Short Break
15h45-17h00 (CET)	Session II: The Horn of Africa's Compounding Crises

	<p>Ethiopia is on the verge of full-scale civil war. The confrontation between the authoritarian armed forces and the democratic movement in Sudan is escalating. Somalia is preparing for critical elections, while al-Shabaab is once again threatening the government. South Sudan is beleaguered by political and socio-economic ills. Peace and democracy currently seem out of reach for the Horn of Africa. The EU has a critical interest in the stability of the region. But there are other factors at play, owing to Sudan and Ethiopia's central role in the region. This panel will look at what can the EU and its member states do to further strengthen and deepen its strategic relationship with one of the world's most unstable yet strategically key regions.</p> <p><i>Speakers</i></p> <p>Murithi Mutiga, Project Director for the Horn of Africa, Crisis Group Lidet Tadesse, Policy Officer in the Security and Resilience Programme, ECDPM Representative from the European Union, to be confirmed</p> <p><i>Moderator</i></p> <p>Elissa Jobson, Director of Global Advocacy, Crisis Group</p>
<p>Day 2 - Thursday, 25 November 2021</p>	
<p>14h00-14h05 (CET)</p>	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Elissa Jobson, Director of Global Advocacy, Crisis Group</p>
<p>14h05-15h15 (CET)</p>	<p>Session III: Stopping Lebanon's Freefall</p> <p>The future of the country seems frailer than ever: a humanitarian crisis is looming over Lebanon, the country is on the edge of total economic collapse and the political deadlock is not easing. Lebanese ruling elites are unwilling to push reforms and leave their grip on power, therefore, the country is in a stalemate after the appointment of a new PM in September 2021. There is a long way to go before the 2022 elections and, meanwhile, the security situation remains unstable - as seen in October 2021 when protests by Hizbollah and Amal supporters in Beirut escalated in a violent outbreak. This panel will look at how the EU, its member states, and other international actors, could mitigate tensions among parties, reduce the risk of a new, dangerous escalation, keep supporting reform and promote good governance.</p>

	<p><i>Speakers</i></p> <p>Michael Miller, Head of Unit for the Middle East, DG NEAR, European Commission Haneen Sayed, Program Leader for Human Development in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, World Bank Heiko Wimmen, Project Director, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, Crisis Group</p> <p><i>Moderator</i></p> <p>Joost Hiltermann, Program Director for the Middle East and North Africa, Crisis Group</p>
<p>15h15- 15h30 (CET)</p>	<p>Short Break</p>
<p>15h30- 16h45 (CET)</p>	<p>Session IV: What Comes After Venezuela’s Elections?</p> <p>Venezuela continues to be in the midst of a tense political standoff and socio-economic meltdown, with hyperinflation, rising crime and food shortages that keep pushing millions to flee the country. A negotiated restoration of democracy and urgent economic reform are vital to reduce violence and mass emigration. The EU has decided to send an election observation mission (EOM) that will have a politically sensitive role in the November regional and municipal polls. The EOM’s report and unfolding political dynamics may have an impact on the dispute between Maduro’s government and the opposition. After the failure of the attempted talks in Mexico, this panel will look at what the EU and international players can do to ensure the successful resumption of pending talks and what measures they should take in the aftermath of the Venezuelan elections.</p> <p><i>Speakers</i></p> <p>Ivan Briscoe, Program Director for Latin America, Crisis Group Phil Gunson, Senior Analyst Venezuela, Crisis Group Maryhen Jiménez, School for Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford Representative from the European Union, to be confirmed</p> <p><i>Moderator</i></p> <p>Mariano de Alba, Senior Advocacy Advisor, Crisis Group</p>
<p>16h45- 17h00 (CET)</p>	<p>Concluding Remarks</p> <p>Giuseppe Famà, Head of EU Affairs, Crisis Group</p>

Registration

If you wish to join our event, **please register via this [link](#)**. In case of questions or concerns, kindly contact icg.events.brussels@crisisgroup.org or Lavinia Pletosu at lpletosu@crisisgroup.org.

Please also feel free to forward the invitation to colleagues that may be interested.

This event takes place within the framework of a project co-funded by the European Union (EU) under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), and managed by the International Crisis Group.



You receive this invitation because of your interest in conflict prevention and the work of the International Crisis Group. If you do not wish to receive any invitations about Crisis Group's conferences anymore, and would like to be removed from our contact list, please respond to this email. We will welcome any feedback on your decision and remain available for all related inquiries.